

# International Bulletin

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## Kissinger's Cambodia Defeat

With Washington's Cambodia policy in a state of crisis and confusion, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is out of town. Before leaving for the Middle East, Kissinger rebuffed the pleas of a congressional fact-finding team just returned from Phnom Penh that he try to negotiate a settlement of the war.

"Mr. Kissinger's critics have said that he lacks interest in peace talks," the *New York Times* reported March 9, "because Cambodia is a small, inconsequential country, it is a losing situation for the United States, and he does not want to be identified with defeats. It is also said that he does not want to expend the limited leverage he has on Peking in obtaining a Cambodian settlement that will be unsatisfactory for Washington in any case." As if to underscore the critics' charges, Kissinger's aides told reporters in Egypt March 7 that he "still believed that it was hopeless to negotiate with the insurgents when the Cambodian government was doing so badly on the battlefield."

Although now trying to avoid the consequences of U.S. policy in Cambodia, the secretary of state along with former president Richard Nixon bears major responsibility for the five-year war which has left more than 10 percent of the Cambodian population dead and half of the rest homeless. Nixon and Kissinger plunged the once peaceful and neutral Cambodia into the Indochina war in 1970 as part of their Vietnam strategy. Prior to that time, under the leadership of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia had managed to stay out of the Vietnam war after gaining independence from France in 1953.

President Lyndon Johnson had rejected strong pressure from the Joint Chiefs in 1968 to authorize a U.S. invasion of Cambodia to "clean out" the North Vietnamese and NLF "sanctuaries" along the border with South Vietnam. Sihanouk had allowed the NLF and North Vietnamese limited use of uninhabited border areas, much to the frustration of the U.S. military command in Saigon. Johnson feared that attacks on the sanctuaries would widen the war and that Sihanouk's opposition would lead to international condemnation for violation of Cambodia's neutrality.

When Nixon and Kissinger came to the White House in 1969, they decided that elimination of the sanctuaries was essential to the success of their Vietnamization strategy.

Beginning in March 1969, Nixon, with Kissinger's full concurrence, ordered the now-famous secret bombing of the Cambodian sanctuaries—3,695 B-52 sorties and 100,000 tons of bombs over the 14 months prior to the U.S. invasion of Cambodia on April 30, 1970. Contrary to administration claims when the secret raids were revealed in July 1973, Prince Sihanouk had publicly protested these raids in March 1969, and has said since then that he never privately agreed to the bombing campaign.

The secret raids, combined with other U.S. sponsored and

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photo/Vietnam News Agency

Rebel NUF troops in Cambodia with captured U.S. 105mm howitzer. Sihanouk has called the U.S. his main weapons supplier.

### RHODESIA

## Arrest of Guerrilla Leader Backfires

A move by Prime Minister Ian Smith's white-minority regime to split the African nationalist movement in Rhodesia and sabotage demands for immediate African majority rule has apparently failed. Smith ordered the arrest and detention March 4 of the militant nationalist leader, the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, in an effort to eliminate his influence within the African National Council (ANC), the umbrella organization with which the Smith regime has been forced to negotiate.

Sithole is the leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), the main guerrilla force in Rhodesia. Although he agreed at a summit conference of African leaders in Lusaka, Zambia, last December to merge his organization with other less militant nationalist groups in preparation for talks with the Smith regime, Sithole has always insisted on immediate majority rule and never abandoned his support for "chimurenga" or armed struggle. Sithole has been a radicalizing force within the ANC coalition—even convincing the reformist ANC leader, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, to support guerrilla warfare publicly as a necessary means to achieve African majority rule in Rhodesia.

Under pressure from South Africa and Britain, Smith released Sithole from jail after 10 years confinement along with other African nationalist leaders to take part in constitutional talks with his regime on the future of Rhodesia. But Sithole and ZANU's uncompromising position in preliminary talks with the government proved to be too much for Smith.

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## PORTUGAL

# Coup Attempt Strengthens Left

Portugal's left-oriented Armed Forces Movement has weathered another political crisis—this time the right-wing military uprising of March 11 led by former president General Antonio de Spínola. And once again the crisis seems to have strengthened the AFM and moved the government further to the left.

The day after the abortive coup, the 200 officers of the AFM, who overthrew the Caetano dictatorship last April, met in Lisbon and decided to "institutionalize" their role in the political life of the country. They declared that they would set up a Revolutionary Council to oversee the government and that they would proceed with the election of a constitutional assembly scheduled for April 12. It will be the first free election in Portugal in almost 50 years.

The AFM also said it would give Premier Vasco Gonçalves "all necessary support" as he reshuffles his cabinet, increasing the power of the AFM and the Portuguese Communist party.

President Francisco Costa Gomes told a television and radio audience the night after the coup was put down by loyal army units that all those involved in the right-wing plot would be rapidly tried and



Portuguese Premier Vasco Gonçalves

punished. He read a list of accused conspirators that included some 30 military officers headed by Spínola. Once it was clear that the coup attempt had failed, Spínola escaped with his wife and 18 officials in three helicopters to a military base just across the border in Spain.

Thousands of demonstrators marched through the streets of Lisbon March 12, celebrating the defeat of the coup attempt and burning copies of Spínola's book *Portugal and the Future*. Ironically, the book played an important role in expressing anticolonial war sentiment in

Portugal just before the overthrow of the fascist regime last spring. Spínola, who had been a military commander in Africa, attacked the Portuguese colonial wars as futile and draining.

The young rebel officers of the AFM named Spínola as temporary head of state when they took power, but they soon crossed swords with the deeply conservative general. The AFM supported independence for Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola, while Spínola wanted the territories to remain linked to Portugal in a kind of federation. Spínola also opposed the AFM's anti-monopoly economic program. He made two grabs for power in July and September of last year, but when the second attempt failed he was forced to resign from the government.

Gen. Otelo de Carvalho, the man in charge of putting down the coup, implied in a radio broadcast March 11 that U.S. ambassador Frank Carlucci was implicated in the right-wing uprising and said that he should be replaced to avoid friction between the U.S. and Portugal. The State Department and Carlucci—who is frequently linked in the Portuguese press to the CIA—strenuously denied any involvement in the attempted coup.

## U.S. to Give up Cuba Blockade?

The Organization of American States is expected to take a key step toward lifting the 11-year-old blockade against Cuba when it meets May 8 in Washington, D.C. Sec. of State Kissinger has indicated that the U.S. will back the change, marking a major turn-around in U.S. policy.

The crucial step in the OAS will be a decision to lift the rules, so that the blockade can be ended by a simple majority, rather than the 2/3 majority now required. In a speech in Houston, Texas, March 1, Kissinger said the U.S. is now ready to participate in a "generally acceptable solution by going along with the majority"—indicating that the U.S. will support the rule change.

A majority of Latin American nations already favor ending the blockade. At a special OAS meeting in Quito, Ecuador, last November, most voted to end the sanctions, failing only because they lacked a 2/3 majority. The U.S. helped block the move by abstaining.

With the rules changed, the OAS could move quickly to end the blockade, imposed under U.S. pressure in 1964. The *New York Times* predicted in an editorial March 4 that "the formal step of lifting

the sanctions is virtually assured for the May OAS meeting." The paper welcomed Washington's change of stance, saying that "impatience with U.S. reluctance" to lift the blockade has been "reaching serious proportions in the OAS."

Seven of 23 OAS members have reopened ties with Havana, ignoring the blockade. Mexico never broke its ties. And the integration of Cuba into the Latin American economy is proceeding in spite of the OAS sanctions.

Once the sanctions are lifted, Kissinger said, the U.S. will "consider changes in its bilateral relations with Cuba." Sen. Edward Kennedy laid the groundwork for such a change March 4 when he introduced legislation to restore full relations with Cuba. The same day, Senators Jacob Javits (R-NY) and Claiborne Pell (D-RI), who visited Cuba last September, introduced a resolution to end the blockade.

Before the OAS meeting, Kissinger will visit several Latin American countries in hopes of repairing his "New Dialogue," which is in deep trouble this year. The crisis in U.S.-Latin American relations was indicated by the cancellation of a major meeting between Latin American

foreign ministers and Kissinger in Buenos Aires this month. Many countries in the hemisphere were already angry over U.S. refusal to support the majority at the Quito meeting. But the final blow was the signing of the U.S. Trade Act, which is seen by all the Latin American countries as discriminatory toward the Third World.

Kissinger will try to use Washington's new Cuba stance to improve relations and put the foreign ministers meeting back on the agenda. At the same time, in his Houston speech, he warned Latin American countries not to take positions of outright opposition to the U.S.—a warning that is certain to raise new fears in Latin America that the New Dialogue is still a one-way street.



Cuban Premier Fidel Castro



## LEBANON

# Fishing Strike Sparks Crisis

The four-month-old government of Prime Minister Rashid Sohl may fall as a result of a two-week confrontation between striking fishermen and government troops which has already left 20 persons dead and scores wounded. The crisis began in the port of Saida, the ancient Phoenician city of Sidon, 25 miles south of Beirut, on February 26, when local fishermen learned that the government had granted a 99-year off-shore fishing concession to a large private company which plans to mechanize the industry.

The Saida fishermen—mainly independents who use simple nets and dinghies—immediately charged that their livelihood would be destroyed by the concession and went on strike to demand its revocation. A former member of parliament for the area, Maarouf Saad, led a demonstration of strikers and their supporters, and a violent clash with the police soon erupted. Saad was fatally wounded when police fired on the demonstrators. He died a week later in the hospital.

Local authorities called in the army, alleging that Palestinian guerrillas were providing arms to the demonstrators. (The Palestine Liberation Organization has denied these charges. But the PLO is itself a political issue in Saida, where many Palestinians live in two large refugee camps and in the city proper.)

In the first week of fighting, snipers dominated the rooftops and even small cannon were used to defend the strikers' barricades, according to AP reports. As Saida was cordoned off by the army, support for the fishermen's demands spread elsewhere. In Beirut, there were demonstrations and barricades of flaming automobile tires. In the northern port of Tyre, fishermen blocked the harbor entrance with their boats.

On March 5, counterdemonstrators took to the streets of Beirut in support of the army's handling of the strikers in Saida. Between 7,000 and 8,000 right-wing demonstrators—mainly students—marched to the tomb of the unknown soldier in Beirut under the auspices of the Kataeb (Phalange) Party and the National Liberal Party. Both right-wing parties have armed militias numbering in the thousands. It was their armed clashes with the PLO last September which toppled the government of the present prime minister's cousin, Takiyeddin Sohl.

The cabinet divided sharply at this stage, with some ministers threatening to resign if the commander in chief of the army is not sacked for his handling of the

strike, while others said they will quit if he is removed.

The death of the former MP, Maarouf Saad, on March 6 provoked a new wave of demonstrations from the supporters of the fishermen.

The commercial fishing company whose concession sparked the controversy is identified in the reports of several wire services as "Protéine," but a spokesman for the Arab League has been unable to verify the identity or nationality of the firm in response to inquiries from Internews. The firm has been variously referred to as a "Beirut-based company," a joint "Saudi-American" venture, and an

"American firm"—suspected by one Lebanese minister of having CIA links.

Reports seem to agree that Protéine's local representative is former Lebanese president Camille Chamoun, head of the right-wing National Liberal Party. Chamoun's pro-Western administration produced a crisis in 1958 when it attempted to block Nasserist MPs from taking the seats to which they were elected. The ensuing emergency was "stabilized" by the landing of U.S. marines—off the very shores whose fishermen now demand the cancellation of Chamoun's 99-year concession.

## Oman Ups Air War Against Rebels

The 11-year-old guerrilla war in Oman's westernmost province, Dhofar, shows no signs of quick resolution—despite many claims of success by the government since the arrival of a large contingent of Iranian reinforcements over a year ago. Oman's ruler, Sultan Qabus bin Said, now seems to view increased air power as the necessary ingredient for victory.

On March 3, Jordan announced that it has given Sultan Qabus 31 Hawker-Hunter jets for his counterinsurgency campaign. Qabus will soon meet with Jordan's King Hussein in a state visit designed to strengthen ties between the two Arab monarchies. Sixteen of the Hawker-Hunter jets have already been delivered to Oman—along with a Jordanian combat battalion.

In late February, Sultan Qabus advertised in *Flight International* magazine for pilots to fly the British bombers he is buying with his oil revenue. He has Jaguar bombers on order and Strikemaster fighters in operation now—flown by pilots on loan from Britain or retired servicemen who join the Omani air force as mercenaries. The *Flight International* ads offer a rank of captain and a tax-free salary of £8,250 (\$19,000) to recruited pilots—preferably veterans of the Royal Air Force or Royal Navy.

The British already provide Oman with about 500 advisers in the counterinsurgency war and maintain two air bases—one at Salalah in war-torn Dhofar province and the other on Masirah Island in the Indian Ocean. (The Masirah facility, which the U.S. has asked to share with Britain, has an 8200-foot runway where nuclear-bearing British Vulcans land.)

The antiguerrilla war is commanded by a British general. The last general to complete a tour of duty in Dhofar failed in his stated goal of "Omanization" of the war. Foreign advisers and mercenaries continue to run the show, and even the Omani infantry retains a large percentage of troops from non-Omani ethnic groups—a third of the 13,000-man force, for example, are reported to be Baluchis. And the increasing emphasis on technology—not just in the air war, but also in ground-to-ground missiles, electronic mine detectors, etc.—can only aggravate this problem. The outgoing British commander, Gen. Timothy Creasey, warned, "The more Oman goes for sophisticated weapons, the more Oman is committing itself to an expatriate presence."



British advisers training Omani troops



# Cambodia After Lon Nol... Sihanouk's United Front

Throughout the five-year war in Cambodia, Washington has described the resistance as a disorganized grouping of dissidents with no clear leadership. Until two years ago, the U.S. said that the bulk of the fighting was being done by North Vietnamese troops. The image of a fragmented, squabbling resistance helped the administration explain why it was so hard to end the war—"we can't find anyone to negotiate with" is a frequent refrain. But Washington has been less than candid.

Since the war began in 1970, rebel soldiers have fought under a unified command on behalf of a single coalition movement, the National United Front of Cambodia. The NUF has its own government, the Royal Government of National Union, which administers 90 percent of Cambodia. All 12 government leaders

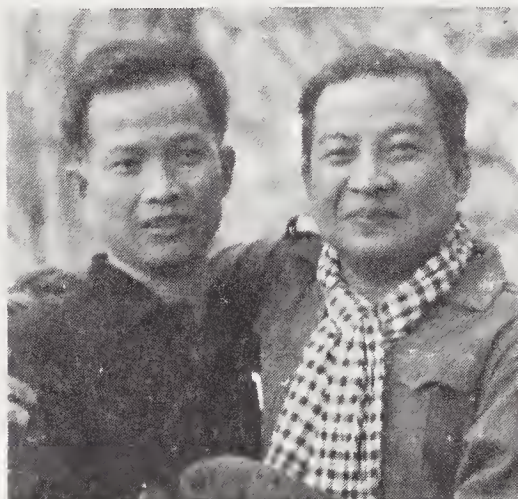
were ministers or state secretaries in previous Cambodian governments.

This coalition was forged immediately following the coup that overthrew Prince Norodom Sihanouk March 18, 1970. Within five days, Sihanouk announced the formation of the National United Front. He charged the new Lon Nol regime with high treason and decreed its dissolution, and he called for the creation of a National Liberation Army.

Within 24 hours, three key figures of the Khmer Rouge declared their support for Sihanouk and the NUF. The Khmer Rouge was composed of leftist intellectuals, peasants and workers who since 1967 had carried out a small-scale guerrilla war against the army and its abuses of the peasantry. They never attacked Sihanouk while he was in power, but called Lon Nol and other rightists "servants of the U.S." who were plotting to overthrow Sihanouk and plunge Cambodia into the Indochina war.

The three Khmer Rouge leaders—Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn, and Hu Nim—were all well known in Cambodia. They had been leftist deputies in the National Assembly but fled to the countryside in 1966. Their announcement of support for the NUF guaranteed a unified liberation movement, combining the experience of the Khmer Rouge with the prestige of Sihanouk.

On May 5, two weeks after the coup, the formation of the Royal Government



Photo/Vietnam News Agency

Sihanouk (right) with Khieu Samphan, 1973

## Defeat

[continued from page 1]

supported actions against Sihanouk inside Cambodia, were intended to pressure the Prince into compliance with a U.S. move into the sanctuaries or to "de-stabilize" his government and lead to a coup. Political and economic developments in Phnom Penh throughout 1969 and early 1970 appear in many ways similar to the events preceding the Sept. 1973 coup in Chile against Salvador Allende. It is not yet known if Kissinger ordered CIA de-stabilization efforts in Cambodia as head of the "40 Committee" which authorized CIA operations against Allende. But there is considerable evidence gathered by journalists, scholars and Sihanouk himself in his book *My War With the CIA* pointing to a well-coordinated U.S. operation to oust the uncompromising chief of state.

With assurances of U.S. support fol-

lowing a coup, General Lon Nol moved against Sihanouk on March 18, 1970, while the Prince was on a diplomatic junket en route to Peking. Lon Nol and his U.S. backers likely expected Sihanouk to retire to the French Riviera and the Cambodian people to passively accept the new government. Although the coup was received favorably at first by many in Phnom Penh, it provoked immediate counter-demonstrations in the countryside. Lon Nol's army shot down several hundred angry, unarmed peasant demonstrators within days of the coup, sparking off a civil war. The U.S. invasion, ordered by Nixon six weeks later, transformed the civil war into a war against the U.S., as B-52s churned up the countryside and U.S. and Saigon troops rolled over Cambodian villages creating tens of thousands of refugees overnight.

Kissinger publicly sought to dissociate himself from the invasion and promised

of National Union was announced in Peking—Sihanouk had been on a foreign tour when the coup occurred. Penn Nouth was named prime minister, a post he had held in many previous governments, and three top ministries went to the three Khmer Rouge leaders.

Sihanouk's call for resistance produced an immediate response among the Cambodian peasantry where he had his deepest support. Spontaneous demonstrations occurred throughout Cambodia, many of them crushed by Lon Nol's troops.

Sihanouk urged armed resistance,

## The Cambodians

*"The Cambodian people are totally dependent on us for their only means of resistance to aggression."*

Pres. Ford letter to House Speaker Carl Albert Feb. 25

"The United States has spent nearly \$7 billion thus far on bombs and aid to Cambodia. The results: Some 700,000 Cambodians have been killed or wounded. That is 10 percent of the population. According to estimates by the Senate refugee subcommittee, 3,389,000 Cambodians have been made homeless by the war. That is nearly half the population. . . .

"Can anyone who looks at that record believe that American intervention has helped the people of Cambodia?"

Anthony Lewis, *S.F. Chronicle* Feb. 10

*"... if these funds are not forthcoming, the Cambodians here would not be able to continue their struggle. Not because they despair, not because they lack the will—because we Americans will deprive them of the means to continue."*

Ambassador John G. Dean, Feb. 26

"In the field, morale was low. A 300-man government battalion retreated from a village in northwest Cambodia, heads down, saying little. The men were ragged, some barefoot.

"They are told to fight, but their uniforms are torn. They have no shells," said Maj. Nong Kry as infantrymen passed him. "Our equipment is sold to rich villagers for their defense. The people do not support us. It is better to stop fighting."

"We are losing the battle," said Khim

that the war would be over in six months. But we know now from various "inside accounts" that Kissinger was Nixon's most ardent supporter within the administration. We also know that Kissinger viewed the invasion of Cambodia not only as a military effort to clean out the sanctuaries and to prop up the already collapsing Lon Nol regime, but also as a political warning to North Vietnam that the U.S. was willing to widen and escalate the war, and to take risks rejected by previous administrations.

Under pressure from a nationwide student strike, Congress forced Nixon to withdraw all U.S. ground troops from



rather than spontaneous demonstrations, and thousands of people reportedly went to the forest to join the struggle, built on the original Khmer Rouge resistance. In his book, *My War with the CIA*, Sihanouk describes how North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front aided in solving the problems of arms and training: "At my request, [North Vietnam's] Gen. Giap sent military instructors for our forces to reinforce a handful of veterans we already had. In quantity, those that Giap sent were few—a couple of thousand—but in quality they were superb . . .

They came, did their job and went home again. . . . Only in the frontier area did we sometimes combine operations with the NLF. . . . The North Vietnamese also had a small, virtually uninhabited area along part of the frontier to protect their communications with the south, and where they were responsible for any military operations."

"From the moment of the coup," Sihanouk continued, "the NLF knew that it was only a matter of time before there would be a concerted drive against their bases and supply dumps in the frontier areas. So they started distributing arms, which would be lost anyway, in generous measure to our rapidly expanding resistance forces." And, Sihanouk added, "there were large-scale desertions of Lon Nol units. In many cases units simply disbanded and handed over their arms to the partisans."

Within a few weeks, the new army held five provinces. "With his bombs," Sihanouk says, "[Nixon] performed the miracle of turning our people into revolutionaries within weeks." Less than two years later, an AP dispatch in Dec. 1971 reported that "highly placed official sources in Saigon estimated that enemy forces now control as much as 80 percent of Cambodia." In 1973, Sihanouk said that the Liberation Army had 200,000 men and women. (The Pentagon claims there are 75,000.)

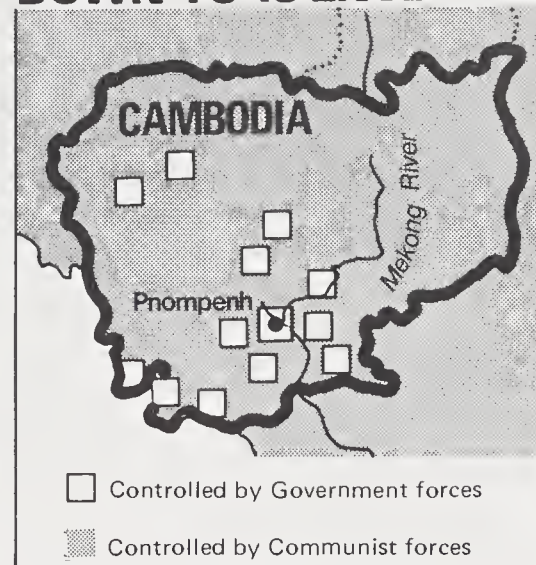
The Royal Government of National Union is now recognized by 62 nations. According to its own reports, it administers 90 percent of Cambodia, providing education and medical care, and carrying out moderate land reform.

In an interview with Oriana Fallaci

The burst of popularity for Lon Nol immediately after the coup proved short-lived as it became clear that his regime meant war profiteering for the generals and the rich, and death and starvation for the poor. Of the billions of dollars poured into Cambodia by the U.S. to prop up the Lon Nol regime, it is estimated that as much as 50 percent or more has been siphoned off by Lon Nol's corrupt generals and fellow politicians. Sihanouk has remarked that his army's main source of supplies is Phnom Penh's generals who sell U.S.-supplied weapons and ammunition. The generals have also made a practice of keeping a large proportion of their soldiers' already meager pay as well as collecting the wages of non-existent "phantom soldiers."

The generals and other members of the elite who have stayed on the Lon Nol side live in luxury, buy draft deferments for their sons, and send U.S. aid dollars to

## DOWN TO 13 ENCLAVES



published in August 1973, Sihanouk explained why, although he is not a communist, he believes that the revolutionaries should govern Cambodia:

The communists, he said, are "serious people. They know how to build up a country and they have done things that I never succeeded in doing. For example, they have put an end to corruption . . . It's no longer as it was in my day when everyone was lazy, singing Sihanouk's songs beneath the palm and banana trees . . . [the people] have learned how to work hard and as a result they are no longer hungry. In the liberated areas they no longer lack anything: neither meat nor vegetables, fruit, rice, clothes. Despite the war, rice production has doubled.

" . . . And when one sees such results, one has to admit that those who have obtained them have the right to govern the country. Mademoiselle, between Lon Nol's corrupt regime and the Khmer Rouge's serious one, the choice is easy."

Swiss bank accounts in preparation for a comfortable exile. The poor do the fighting, and the refugees beg for food while the U.S. aid shipments of rice go to the army or the few relief agencies in Phnom Penh and the merchants hoard their stocks for speculation.

Lon Nol has failed to rally public support even now that the capital is under siege. Meanwhile, his incompetent government is unable to govern the city, and, according to the *New York Times* March 8, "The cabinet often spends entire days in conference and then emerges with a decision of miniscule importance such as a new tax on air conditioners."

Kissinger apparently wants to distance himself as far as possible from the disarray in Phnom Penh. He may be out of town, but the secretary of state deserves full credit for the policy which he and Richard Nixon formulated and executed beginning in 1969.

## Aid Debate

Sao, a sergeant in jeans and an army shirt. . . . 'We have armor, artillery and airplanes, but we will lose the war because the high-ranking officers do not know tactics. They are busy making money.' "

Associated Press Feb. 26

" 'The Army's morale is shot,' said a Pentagon official. 'They could fold in a matter of days, and the government would cave in.' "

*Newsweek* March 10

"The policy of this country is to help those nations . . . where the government and the people of a country want to protect their country from foreign aggression."

Pres. Ford Feb. 26

"Over the years the Cambodian insurgents have developed into an indigenous, nationalist movement and since 1973 the Cambodian war has been a genuine civil war."

*Washington Post* Feb. 23

" . . . not even the most hawkish U.S. embassy officials in Southeast Asia believe that the North Vietnamese control the Khmer Rouge movement, even though it is Communist dominated."

*Time* March 10

" . . . if a supplemental [appropriation] is not voted within the next few weeks, it is certain that Cambodia must fall because it will run out of ammunition."

Sec. of State Kissinger Feb. 25

"The administration's dire prognoses also ignore the most crucial question about the Cambodian situation: To whom will the Phnom Penh regime fall? The answer: to other Cambodians."

*Time* March 10

Cambodia by June 30, 1970. But the administration continued support for Lon Nol with aid and advisers, and massive bombing raids which were falsely reported as targeted on NLF and North Vietnamese troops on the Cambodia-South Vietnamese border. By the time Congress ordered the bombing halted on August 15, 1973, the U.S. had dropped more than a half million tons of bombs on Cambodia.

The U.S. invasion and bombing, while staving off the defeat of the Lon Nol regime, greatly increased opposition in Cambodia to the U.S. and its client government in Phnom Penh.



# internewsroundup

## U.S. KEEPS NAVAL BASE (FOR SIX TIMES THE COST)

According to a report in the *New York Times* March 9 Bahrain has been persuaded to "reconsider" its October 1973 decision to abrogate the agreement whereby the United States maintains a 10-acre naval base on one of Bahrain's islands. The report noted, "Highly placed Western and Arab sources said that the United States had accepted a six-fold increase in its payments to Bahrain for continued use of a port for the Navy's Middle East force"—which it described as consisting of two destroyers, two aircraft, and a 500-foot command vessel with three-inch guns, all maintained by about 475 military personnel. The Persian Gulf base includes pier space, airport facilities, and a communications compound. It is now the only U.S. naval station between the Mediterranean and Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Bahrain's foreign minister told the *New York Times* that continued use of the facility would depend on the U.S. "attitude toward the Arab cause in the Middle East."

## bahrain

## GOVERNMENT TROOPS "HUMILIATED BY THE REBELS"

"Two years after Moslem insurgents made their first coordinated attacks on Government outposts in the southern Philippines," reported the *New York Times* March 9, "the martial-law Government of President Ferdinand Marcos finds itself mired in a nasty guerrilla struggle in which the chances of either a negotiated settlement or a military solution seems slight."

## philippines



In a special report from the province of Catabato on the island of Mindanao, *Times* reporter Joseph Lelyveld says that "even after a five-fold increase in combat strength, Government forces are now thinly stretched over the troubled areas of western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, where the total rebel strength is officially estimated at 16,000 armed men. Unofficial estimates put the rebel force as

high as 20,000." Government forces are "uneven at best," says Lelyveld, and are "regularly humiliated by the rebels, who are usually their equals in arms as a result of support from Libya and other Arab sources."

Lelyveld says that Moslem demands include internal sovereignty and political autonomy, stopping just short of secession, when they were presented by the Moro National Liberation Front in talks with the Marcos regime held in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, in January. Marcos agreed to attend the talks, sponsored by the Islamic Conference, because the government fears "that it might face an oil embargo if it adopted an uncompromising stance" toward the rebels, who are supported by other Moslem countries. The talks, which stalled, are scheduled to resume in April, but Marcos's advisers say he will not give in on the key question of autonomy.

## CIVIL WAR AND LAND REFORM

Fighting between government troops and secessionist guerrillas in the northern province of Eritrea has shifted from the local capital of Asmara and other towns to the countryside. However, there is little eyewitness reporting of the guerrilla war because correspondents are forbidden by Ethiopian officials to visit the battle areas. A government minister in neighboring Sudan, which has offered to

## ethiopia

mediate the conflict, said March 12 that some 3,000 people have died so far in the Eritrean fighting.

Although Ethiopia's military rulers have made no public efforts to negotiate a settlement with Eritrean independence leaders, they have pressed ahead with plans to transform Ethiopia into a socialist state. Having nationalized banks, insurance companies and 72 domestic and foreign-owned corporations earlier this year, the military government announced March 4 the most far-reaching land reform program ever attempted by an African country. Chinese agricultural advisers are said to have played an important role in developing the radical plan, which would end Ethiopia's archaic system of feudal agriculture. Private ownership of land will be limited to 24 acres, hired labor and tenant farming will be abolished, and state farms and village cooperatives will be established.

On March 5, 500,000 Ethiopians marched through the streets of Addis Ababa in a massive display of support for the land reform program.

## BEHIND THE IRA CEASE-FIRE

Many Irish and British observers report that the decision by the Provisional Irish Republican Army to declare an open-ended cease-fire in Northern Ireland on Feb. 10 reflects diminishing Catholic support for the IRA's bombing campaign. Other commentators speculate that the Provos needed time to recover from combat losses and arrests.

But recent reports from Northern Ireland indicate that by declaring the cease-fire—the longest so far in the bloody six-year conflict—the Provos appear to have won a number of important political concessions, including virtual recognition of the IRA by the British government. Throughout the fighting in Northern Ireland, officials in London have refused to meet with IRA "terrorists." But since the cease-fire declaration British civil servants have been negotiating quietly but regularly with the IRA.

The British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Merlyn Rees, has also promised a gradual release of interned IRA suspects, and he announced Feb. 24 that 80 out of some 500 prisoners will soon be freed. Finally, the Provos won from the British the right to set up "incident centers" in Catholic areas to monitor and safeguard the cease-fire. The IRA centers have infuriated Protestant leaders and moderate Catholic groups like the Social Democratic and Labour Party, who charge that the centers give the IRA a semi-official status, including the de facto powers of a local police force.

## U.S. AMBASSADOR, FORMER CIA AGENT, RECALLED

U.S. ambassador Col. William Kintner has been unexpectedly recalled to Washington to head a "high level government study of U.S. policy interests in the Pacific region." Two days before his departure March 15, he attended an honorary farewell banquet hosted by the Thai foreign minister. Despite his ceremonial departure, however, Internews correspondent Linda Garrett reports from Bangkok that Kintner "was not a popular ambassador here. His home was guarded by a seven-foot chain-link fence, and the embassy was protected by closed-circuit TV." Kintner was well known in Thailand as a former CIA employee and director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute at the University of Pennsylvania. He was often described as "to the right of Richard Nixon."

Garrett reports that Kintner's recall "came as a surprise to many Thais, since he has been ambassador for only 16 months."

## thailand



The government denied reports that he was ordered back to Washington because of his "alleged unfavorable relationship with the Foreign Ministry." Kintner's successor has not been announced, but Garrett reports that the Thai press has speculated it will be Charles Whitehouse, current ambassador to Laos.

### COALITION GOVERNMENT WORKING

"The news in Laos," Internews correspondent Linda Garrett reports from Vientiane, "is that the coalition government is **laos** indeed working, and to the surprise of some Lao-tians and foreign residents, the Pathet Lao are struggling very hard to make the new government a success. In spite of continuing disputes over cease-fire lines and other issues, it appears a transition is being made toward general elections and the formation of a permanent coalition government."

Garrett reports that the coalition has agreed to accept aid from all countries as long as there are no strings attached. So far Sweden, China, North Vietnam and the U.S. have all given aid to the coalition government for reconstruction. "While the U.S. has nearly completed a 40-mile road near Luang Prabang," Garrett says, "Washington has reduced its refugee aid." More than one-third of the population was forcibly resettled as a result of the U.S. bombing in Laos, Garrett reports, but Ambassador Charles Whitehouse recently said the U.S. "will help widows, orphans, and lepers, but the others will have to take care of themselves." They are taking care of themselves, Garrett reports, largely by returning to their homes in the Pathet Lao zones. A recent survey by a joint commission of the Pathet Lao and the Vientiane side reported that in three provinces surveyed, more than 90 percent of the refugees had chosen to return to their villages in Pathet Lao territory rather than remain on the Vientiane side.

### PINOCHET TIGHTENING HIS GRIP?

Junta chief Gen. Augusto Pinochet ordered a major shake-up in the Chilean army following the mysterious death of Defense Minister Oscar Bonilla in a helicopter accident **chile** March 3.

Bonilla had the image of a moderate in the junta, primarily because of his past association with the Christian Democratic Party. His reputation led many to predict that he would eventually be arrested or dismissed. Last fall, he was out of sight for several months, provoking rumors that he was under house arrest—rumors denied by Bonilla and the junta. Bonilla was second in command in the army, after Pinochet, and he was thought by many to be the only officer with an alternate power base. Others who might offer a potential challenge to the junta chief

have been forced out, as Pinochet has increasingly drawn around him a tight circle of loyal officers.

Bonilla was expected to be succeeded by Gen. Hector Bravo, third in command of the army, who was also known as a moderate. But last week, Bravo was suddenly named ambassador to Thailand and the Defense Minister slot was given to Gen. Herman Brady. Brady is reported to have participated with Pinochet in all the secret meetings held in various military units in preparation for the Sept. 11 coup against Allende.

### THE RETURN OF CAMPORA?

Former Argentina president Hector Campora, now living in exile in Mexico, hinted at a press conference March 11 in Mexico City **argentina** that he might return soon to Argentina and resume his political career.

Campora is a left-wing Peronist whose brief presidency from May to July 1973 laid the groundwork for the return of the late Juan Peron. He was later condemned by the right wing of the Peronist movement and sent out of the country as ambassador to Mexico. When Peron died last summer, Campora was forced to resign his diplomatic post. He has since received death threats from the right-wing assassination squad, the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance.



Campora

A new left-wing Peronist political party—the Partido Peronista Autentico—has been formed in Argentina, and Latin News Agency speculated March 12 that Campora might be the party's presidential candidate in the 1977 general elections.

Meanwhile, the government has been hard hit by the failure of its antiguerrilla operation in Tucuman province and the Montonero guerrilla kidnaping and execution of John Patrick Egan, the U.S. honorary consul in Cordoba. The Montoneros also kidnaped the chief justice of the provincial supreme court in Buenos Aires, Hugo Alfredo Anzorregui. The government argued in the case of Egan that it would not negotiate with the guerrillas (who asked only that the government prove that several captured Montoneros were alive and well), but it reversed its stand in the case of Anzorregui, releasing a leader of the outlawed Armed Liberation Forces (FAL), Sergio Schneider, in return for the judge.

The British journal, *Latin America*, notes in its March 7 issue that the government has gone beyond the crisis stage: "General deterioration and chaos are the order of the day . . . and the process is speeding up."

### INTERNEWSITEMSINTERNEWSITEMSINTERNEWSITEMSINTERNEWSITEMSINTERNEWSITEMSINTERNEWSITEMSINTERNEWSITEMSINTER

**CYPRUS:** The U.S. embassy acknowledged that U.S. U2 spy planes make reconnaissance flights over the Middle East from the British base at Akrotiri on Cyprus. (*Washington Post* 3/1) • **KUWAIT:** Negotiations began on the take-over of the remaining 40% interest held by Gulf Oil and British Petroleum in the Kuwait oil company. (Agence France Presse 3/12) • **JORDAN:** King Hussein has asked to make an official visit to the Soviet Union to sound out Moscow on a possible disengagement agreement with Israel. (AFP 3/12) • **ARGENTINA:** The U.S. has quietly halved its diplomatic staff in Argentina in the last six months because of the wave of kidnapings and assassinations. (AFP 3/4) The youngest brother of Che Guevara, Juan Martin, was arrested following a shootout between a group of presumed guerrillas and police. (AP 3/1) • **BRAZIL:** Three military courts ordered the arrest of 36 more persons accused of "links with communism." (Prensa Latina 3/11) • **CHILE:** The state of siege, which has been in effect since the 1973 coup, was extended for six more months. (Latin 3/11) ITT will cooperate with the military junta on a communications center. (PL 3/7) • **VENEZUELA:** The government presented its long-awaited bill for the nationalization of foreign oil holdings

to the Venezuelan congress. (Latin 3/11) Pres. Perez announced that Venezuela will try to diversify its petroleum market, suggesting that exports to the U.S. could be reduced. (AFP 3/12) • **SOUTH KOREA:** Hit by three months of government-backed economic sanctions, the outspoken South Korean paper *Dong A-Ilbo* was forced to lay off 18 senior reporters. (AP 3/8) • **RHODESIA:** Police Minister Jimmy Kruger said that South African police units are no longer engaging in operational activities against guerrillas, but they are not being withdrawn from Rhodesia. (AFP 3/10) • **SOUTH AFRICA:** The International Commission of Jurists accused the South African government of using threats to force people to vote in last January's elections in Namibia, where the main nationalist movement had called for a boycott. (AFP 3/13) • **AMBASSADORS:** The Senate approved the nominations of William Bowdler and Harry Shlaudeman as ambassadors to South Africa and Venezuela, and Nathaniel Davis as Ass't Sec. of State for African Affairs, despite charges that they took part in CIA operations in Chile, Guatemala and Cuba (Internews 3/11) • **NONALIGNED:** Foreign ministers of 15 nonaligned nations will meet in Havana, Cuba, starting Mar. 17. (AFP 3/8)



# Rhodesia

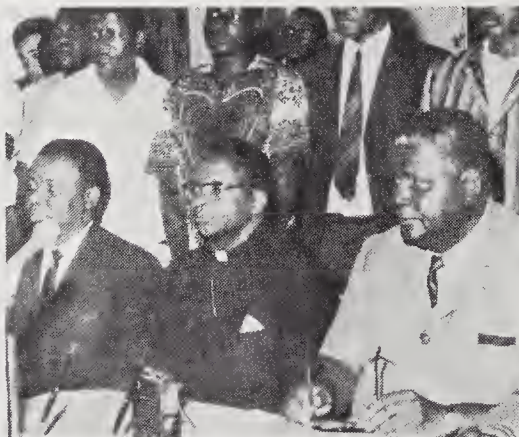
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Sithole was arrested in the capital of Salisbury on charges of plotting to assassinate his political rivals—charges which ZANU leader Robert Mugabe called “a heap of rubbish.” The few black members of the Rhodesian parliament—normally a soft-spoken group—condemned Sithole’s arrest, saying that it “smacks of the old colonial policy of divide and rule, of setting African against African.”

At first, it seemed that Smith’s divide-and-conquer tactics might have worked. Joshua Nkomo, the leader of the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) and a long-time political rival of Sithole, seemed undisturbed by Sithole’s arrest. His initial statements implied that negotiations between the Smith regime and the ANC should continue, in spite of the arrest.

But Nkomo was apparently persuaded by other ANC leaders and perhaps militants within his own organization, ZAPU, to close ranks with all the other nationalist leaders in opposition to the arrest and to continued talks with the Smith regime.

After Bishop Muzorewa declared that the ANC would refuse to negotiate with Smith until Sithole was released, Nkomo expressed the same position in a strong public statement. Nkomo called the white-minority regime’s assassination plot charges against Sithole “a fabrication” made in hopes that there was an element of sell-out black leadership “prepared to



Sithole, Muzorewa, and Nkomo

do a deal” with Smith.

“This is, of course, nonsense,” Nkomo said, adding that “we cannot continue to negotiate with a government that continues to detain African nationalists.”

Dr. Ahrn Palley, a constitutional expert and white Rhodesian critic of the Smith regime, commented after Sithole’s arrest that “Smith has thrown a match into the petrol tank” and he joined the black members of the Rhodesian parliament in accusing Smith of gross political stupidity.

Dr. Edson Sithole, the publicity director of the ANC, declared in a statement to the press March 10 that the arrest of Sithole was “a pure political maneuver which has backfired.” The ANC representative said Sithole’s detention “has shattered constitutional talks between the government and the African National Council, as well as the whole southern African detente exercise.”

With encouragement from the United States and Britain, South Africa’s Prime Minister John Vorster and Zambia’s President Kenneth Kaunda have carefully tried since last fall to create what they call “detente” between the white-minority regimes and the black governments in southern Africa. The interests of all four of these nations are to defuse racial conflict in the region and promote Western-financed economic development—all within the framework of South African regional control. The key to this arrangement, which would allow South Africa to preserve apartheid but maintain good relations with neighboring black governments, is Rhodesia, where a guerrilla campaign led by ZANU poses a serious challenge to white-minority rule.

South Africa, therefore, leaned on the Smith regime to make some kind of settlement with the nearly 6-million-strong African majority to avert a larger conflict that could eventually engulf South Africa itself.

But Smith has been reluctant to make any significant concessions to African nationalists, and he is still dead set against majority rule “in my lifetime.” Smith’s

intractable policies stalemated talks with the ANC earlier this year. Now his arrest of Sithole seems to have undone whatever progress in negotiations had been made since the Lusaka agreement last December, which promised a cease-fire in return for the release of all political prisoners in Rhodesia and freedom of action for all political groups, including outlawed liberation movements like ZANU and ZAPU.

ZANU leader Robert Mugabe told reporters in Salisbury March 4 that talks with the Smith regime had been revealed as “a total waste of time.” He predicted that Sithole’s arrest would spark intensified guerrilla warfare in the country and that ZANU leaders would do nothing to stop it. “ZANU will not be intimidated into submission by Sithole’s arrest,” Mugabe emphasized. “We will go on with the struggle to the bitter end.”

Meanwhile, the 54-year-old Sithole is scheduled to appear at a secret court hearing March 24. The trial, in which witnesses will be allowed to testify without cross-examination by Sithole or his legal counsel, will be presided over by acting chief justice Hector MacDonald. There is widespread speculation within the ANC that Sithole will refuse to appear before the kangaroo court.

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